

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

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Battle Color Detachment comes to Miramar



The Drum and Bugle Corps and Silent Drill Platoon will be performing Monday at 3 p.m. at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. The Silent Drill Platoon, a 24-man platoon, executes precise drill movements and expert handling of their hand-polished 10.5 pound M-1 Garand rifles with fixed bayonets. *Photo courtesy of Marine Corps Silent Drill Team*

Story by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The Drum and Bugle Corps and Silent Drill Platoon will be performing Monday at 3 p. m. at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar flight line behind the airfield operations building.

The Silent Drill Platoon, a 24-man platoon, executes precise drill movements and expert handling of their hand-polished 10.5 pound M-1 Garand rifles with fixed bayonets.

The Marines, who are hand selected from Schools of Infantry in Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Camp Lejeune, N.C., are assigned to Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. to serve a two-year ceremonial tour.

These Marines train in the field as infantrymen and im-

prove their skills at Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Quantico, Va., and other bases, according to the platoon's press kit.

The Silent Drill Platoon first performed in 1948 and received such a vast response that it soon became part of the routine parades at Marine Barracks, Washington D.C.

The Drum and Bugle Corps performs alongside the Silent Drill Platoon and is known worldwide as a premier musical marching unit.

The unit of more than 80 Marine musicians, dressed in ceremonial red and white uniforms, performs in traditional Friday Evening Parades held at Marine Barracks, Washington D.C. They also perform in Sunset Parades at the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Monument) in Arlington, Va., every Tuesday evening during the summer months.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, military musicians passed musical commands to battle formations. The sound of bugle calls or drumbeats could easily be heard over loud noises on the battlefield, and signaled to Marines to attack or retire for the evening.

The Drum and Bugle Corps was tasked with presidential support duties. For this they were later awarded the scarlet and gold breast cord by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which they proudly display on their uniforms.

By the early 1950s the unit was respectfully known and had increased its number of civilian performances. The music composed played a key role in their excellence during this period. These factors also led to the unit's formal nickname, "The Commandant's Own," a title noting their special status as musicians for the commandant of the Marine Corps.

Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



74°/57°
Today



74°/58°
Saturday



74°/57°
Sunday

**Marines join
forces with
SOCOM
Page 3**



**'Wolfpack'
reaches
milestone
Page 6**



DoD: No joint use for Miramar

Commentary by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The security of the southwest United States is a critical component to our overall national security, as it is home to several Navy and Marine Corps bases.

The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority has proposed replacing the current civilian airport at nearby Lindbergh Field with a joint use military/civilian airport at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

The authority is also considering several alternative sites for a new airport, including an expansion of downtown San Diego's Lindbergh Field — the nation's busiest single-runway airport with more than 220,000 takeoffs and landings each year.

The joint use issue has become the subject of public debate in the San Diego community and one with serious considerations affecting our national security interests. There are also several alternative proposals being discussed by the SDCRAA.

The airport site recommendation will be formally placed on the ballot for a San Diego County vote in November. Specifically, up for consideration are two possible locations for joint use at Miramar: 1) a runway just south of Miramar Road; and 2) a double runway in East Miramar (east of I-15).

Working in full cooperation with the SDCRAA, the Department of Defense sees joint use at Miramar as being incompatible with continued military use of the site and strongly opposes either location at Miramar.

In response to joint use considerations and with concern for the national security role of Miramar, Navy and Marine Corps officials have stated that they are willing to be part of the decision-making process, but that a joint-use airport for San Diego is not feasible under any circumstances.

"The Marine Corps has almost half of its bases located in southern California and all have been reviewed repeatedly," said Maj. Gen. Michael Lehnert, commanding general, Marine Corps Installations West, in a recent television interview with Gloria Penner, KPBS. "We have serious concerns and objections to any joint use proposal at either Miramar or (Marine Corps Base) Camp Pendleton."

Lehnert also said that any proposal that would mix high volume commercial air traffic with high volume tactical air traffic is flawed on the basis that it fails to consider overall safety issues and impact on the military's ability to train Marines.

Echoing military authorities, local San Diego communities are also playing a key role in expressing doubts about the joint use proposals.

In January, the Mira Mesa Town Council agreed in opposition to joint use of Miramar as a civilian airport and as an option in the Airport Site Selection Program to be presented to the San Diego County electorate in November.

The council further stated that their opposition is "based on the fundamental incompatibility of the military and civilian operations at Miramar," adding that the incompatibilities are "severe enough

that joint use would likely lead to eventual abandonment of military use of Miramar."

Most recently, the federal government released its highest-level opposition.

Following a Feb. 24 meeting with Rep. Susan A. Davis, who has asked for feedback from the military on the issue, Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter, summarized and reiterated the DoD's resistance to joint use at Miramar.

"Extensive analyses based upon longstanding evaluation criteria for joint use leads to the inescapable conclusion that (Camp Pendleton, Miramar and Naval Air Station North Island) cannot provide the home to a commercial airport or joint-use airfield without undermining military response, security, readiness or safety," said Winter. "I am not discounting the challenges that face the San Diego region, but the national defense mission of these vital installations is and must remain the paramount concern of the (DoD)."

With the responsibility of ensuring national security, while working closely with the local community, the Marine Corps has demonstrated a strong commitment to being a good neighbor in San Diego County, said Lehnert.

"Solving San Diego's airport problem at the expense of national security is a bad idea," said Lehnert.

Adm. Len Hering, commander, Navy Region Southwest, also said in an interview with Penner, that Base Realignment and Closure reviews have provided optimum conditions for forces integral to the air, land and sea interface to train in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

"Each base in the (southern California region) operates independently, but is intrinsically linked to one another," said Hering.

"The unique environment in southern California means we are not willing to compromise training and national security. We are fully engaged in helping the (SDCRAA) study the issue (of joint use) to meet military requirements."

Comprehensive studies in 1984, 1989 and 1991, in addition to five rounds of BRAC reviews by both the president and Congress, have validated Miramar and Camp Pendleton as crucial to national security, Lehnert said

Furthermore, federal law has validated Miramar's importance to national security. In 1996, the DoD Authorization Act — demonstrating Congress's concern with Miramar's national security role — prohibits the joint use of Miramar.

Consistent with this precedent, and as subject to federal authority, Navy and Marine Corps officials remain opposed to joint use and any negative impact on national defense requirements, training, operations and mission readiness for the safety of the nation.

So would a voter referendum this November in favor of joint use sound the death knell for the Marine Corps at Miramar as we know it?

Not so fast.

Any vote on joint use would be a non-binding referendum. Federal laws and policies would remain unaffected by state or local government. No civilian airport could be constructed without the federal government's approval, leaving joint use an issue that can only be answered by the DoD and our nationally elected officials.



Is this your Buick?

The above vehicle has been marked for impound by the Provost Marshal's Office. To avoid having the vehicle towed, please store it in the Marine Corps Community Services or Traffic Management Office lots.

Abandoned vehicles at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar present security risks as well as environmental and safety concerns. PMO attempts to identify and contact vehicle owners of illegally parked, abandoned vehicles prior to tagging the vehicle with a Department of Defense notice. Vehicles are then scheduled for towing three days following the notice.

For more information, please call 577-1276 or 577-4139.

MIRAMARKS

"Do you think it's a good idea to convert Miramar to a civilian airport?"

CAPT. JOSEPH J. PORRAZZO

Pilot
VMFA-323

"I don't think it is a good idea. I don't think the surrounding area is ready to hear 757's flying over their heads."



SGT. MICHAEL A. COX

Pay/Separations NCOIC
H&HS

"It's not a good idea because this area is congested enough. We would be bumping heads!"



FLIGHT JACKET

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MAJ. GEN. SAMUEL T. HELLAND
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



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Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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Gunnery Sgt. Matthew L. Sewell
Public Affairs Chief
2nd Lt. Armando A. Daviu
Internal Information Officer
Cpl. Paul Leicht
Internal Information Chief
Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver
Layout

MARSOC helps fight Global War on Terrorism

Story by Cpl. Ken Melton

II MEF Combat Correspondent

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Since the founding of the United States of America, there has been a special operations unit.

More than 50 years ago, the United States activated the Office of Strategic Services, which consisted of three of the military branches (Navy, Army, Air Force) to help defend the country.

Friday, in a ceremony with high-ranking military and government officials present, America's newest weapon activated and will give terrorists more things to fear as the United States Marine Corps established Marine Special Operations Command and joined the celebrated ranks of the United States Special Operations Command.

SOCOM's mission is to plan, direct and execute special operations in the conduct of the war on terrorism in order to disrupt, defeat and destroy terrorist networks that threaten the United States, its citizens and interests worldwide. It also organizes, trains and equips special operations forces provided to geographic combatant commanders, American ambassadors and their country teams. Since SOCOM's creation in 1987, the Marine Corps has been an outside factor in helping it accomplish these missions.

Now having their own special operations forces component, Marines will directly support current SOF missions and begin new missions with different purposes. The key tasks of MARSOC will be: direct action, special reconnaissance, foreign internal defense, counterterrorism, information operations, and unconventional warfare. According to the mission statement, MARSOC will train and provide a fully capable Marine special operations force to SOCOM for worldwide deployments to execute assigned missions.

MARSOC units will be capable of task organizing as scalable, tailorable and responsive special operations units from sea-based platforms as well as from United States locations. MARSOC headquarters is located at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and consists of several subordinate elements. The Foreign Military Training Unit will provide military combat-skills training and advisor support to identified foreign forces.

The Marine Special Operations Support Group will provide combined arms plannings and coordination, K-9 support, special operations communications support, combat service support including logistics, and all-source intelligence fusion capability.

Two Marine Special Operations Battalions, one on each coast, will be organized, trained and equipped to deploy for worldwide missions as directed by MARSOC.

Elements of different units, including 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (Anti-Terrorism), will continue to transition into needed areas of MARSOC to give it a stronger foundation. As a major command, MARSOC will report directly to the commandant of the Marine Corps for service matters and will be under the operational control of SOCOM.



Brig. Gen. Dennis J. Hejlik, Marine Special Operations Command's first commander (right), uncases the MARSOC colors at the unit's activation ceremony Feb. 24, at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Photo by Army Sgt. Sara Wood

Marine snipers keep eye on insurgents

Story by Lance Cpl. Christopher J. Zahn

1st Marine Division

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Cpl. Justin V. Novi summed up the mission with a simple statement.

“It’s a huge building to clear.”

Novi’s small team of Marines was just one part of Operation Industrial Revolution, a sweep performed by Marines from 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment. The battalion, under command of Regimental Combat Team 8, 1st Marine Division, finished up the operation in mid-February. It was designed to disrupt insurgent activity in Fallujah’s industrial area.

Novi, from Pittsburgh, Pa., had his work cut out for him. While regular infantry Marines work in squads, platoons and companies, Novi and his sniper team, assigned to Headquarters and Service Company, work on a smaller scale.

Their work keeps them hidden in the shadows. Their mission during the operation was daunting. They were to infiltrate a factory, one of the larger buildings in the area, and set up an overwatch for a nearby cordon.

Under an inky black sky, the Marines moved silently. Their first obstacle was encountered in minutes – a locked gate that could only be opened from the inside.

Novi took the lead, climbing hand over hand. He grasped at small irregularities in the cinder-block wall, pulling himself up until he lay flat on top of an abandoned guard shack. Below, Cpl. Jason Elder, a 22-year-old Marlboro, Mass., native, passed up his rifle before following.

One-by-one, each Marine in the team passed over. They scurried off, entering the building. They ducked into shadowy rooms, their steps stuttered and quick and voices low over their personal radios. Methodically, painstakingly, they cleared the factory, room-by-room. The only inhabitants, a small crew of night workers, were rounded up and led to an empty floor where they could be easily observed.

“That was pretty exciting,” said Cpl. Darren R. Smykowski, a 21-year-old from Mentor, Ohio. “It could have gone bad real quick if any of these guys had tried anything, but it went smooth, which is good.”

Given a little more time to reflect on the small team’s mission, he put it into a different perspective.

“That was crazy, clearing a building like this... That’s a job for a platoon, or even a company,” he said.

The work for the sniper team, though, had just begun. With only a few hours of darkness remaining, they had to choose an observation site, one that wouldn’t give away their position, but command a superior viewing, and possibly shooting, platform.

“Before the sun comes up, I want to have the hide fully set up,” Smykowski said. “There’s an Iraqi Army observation post that can see this roof and I don’t want them to shoot me thinking I’m an insurgent.”

He moved out across the roof, low-crawling to stay hidden. Even now, his progress was frustratingly slow and deliberate. He made several trips to get all the gear in the



Cpl. Darren R. Smykowski, a 21-year-old from Mentor, Ohio, looks through the scope of his rifle while providing overwatch for Marines from 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, during Operation Industrial Revolution. He is a scout-sniper attached to Headquarters and Service Company serving with Regimental Combat Team 8. Operation Industrial Revolution was designed to disrupt insurgent activity in Fallujah’s industrial area. The operation netted several weapons caches. Photo by Lance Cpl. Christopher J. Zahn

hide.

The night sky by now was giving way to pinks and oranges, dawn breaking over the city. And new concerns arose.

Iraqi factory workers were beginning to drift in for the morning shift. It’s disconcerting for Marines who crave secrecy in everything they do, but in a sense, reassuring that their mission has, so far, gone off without a hitch.

“The good thing about that is that if they are showing up for work, that means they don’t know we’re here,” Novi explained. “Hopefully that continues for the rest of the day.”

Still, Elder and Novi take no chances. They meet each worker after they come through the gate and search them, leading them inside. There, Cpl. Stephen B. Lutze, a 22-year-old from Interlachen, Fla., stood watch.

Despite being in the presence of armed Marines, the Iraqis were welcoming. They offered the Marines cigarettes and tried teaching them Arabic phrases. The Marines in turn joked with them and offered food and water from their own personal supplies.

While Marines below kept the factory workers at ease, Smykowski was riveted to his binoculars and rifle. It’s deadly serious work that could require split-second decisions and a spot-on accuracy. His mission was one of watching and waiting.

“For the last five months this is all I have done, sit behind a rifle and wait for someone to cross my sights with a

weapon so I can shoot them,” he said.

Still, he doesn’t romanticize his job. It’s not a role that lends itself to great feats of adventure or moments of daring, but cool nerves of steel and long stretches of demanding concentration.

“It’s nothing like the movies or even in the stories you hear,” Smykowski explained. “I like it though. Doing things like we did this morning ... that’s what makes this job fun.”

As the sun rose in the sky, more Iraqis showed up for work, only to be met by Elder and Novi. The Iraqis joined their co-workers under the observant gaze of Lutz. The operation began and the battalion’s infantry set their cordon, clearing houses. They milled about with Smykowski above, who kept his eyes drilled into the city below, looking for any sign of a threat.

The sweep took several hours, with a weapons cache unearthed. Confiscated were numerous small arms, ammunition, rocket-propelled grenades and launchers.

The battalion’s Marines collapsed the cordon and the sniper team was once again alone. Smykowski called for their extraction. A Combined Anti-Armor Team arrived shortly afterward and the snipers slipped from their positions to the vehicles, taking all their gear with them and leaving as quickly as they came.

“That mission went real smooth today,” Elder added. “Everything went exactly the way we planned it, and everybody did their job. That’s all you can ask for.”

Marines ensure Hornet's radar capabilities

Story by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

When a pilot encounters a problem during his flight, he reports the discrepancy to the maintenance crews in an after-flight debrief. This day, the problem was with the aircraft's radar system.

The communications navigations section of Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, was tasked Feb. 16, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, to repair the radar system of an F/A-18 Hornet.

A radar system is used to detect range and location of anything that reflects a signal. Radar shoots out a signal that can detect other aircraft up to 150 miles away.

"Radar gives the pilots a view of what is ahead of them," said Cpl. Edward L. Martinez, communications navigations technician, VMFA(AW)-121. "It's a helpful tool in combat. It gives pilots the capability to lock on to a target."

The Marines started their mission not knowing exactly what was wrong with the system. They had to first determine what was wrong before they could repair it.

"We accomplish our mission using a combination of thorough troubleshooting, systems tests and knowledge of the aircraft," said Martinez, a 21-year-old native of San Jose, Calif.

Maintenance crews repair aircraft daily to keep the squadron fully functional.

"As a squadron, we have a certain amount of flight hours we must meet monthly and annually," said Martinez. "The more aircraft we have in the sky the easier that is to achieve."

The Marines first tested the aircraft to determine what the problem was. They powered the aircraft using a mobile generator to run the aircraft's testing systems.

"The aircraft can test itself and tell us what is wrong," said Lance Cpl. Bryon W. Groebner, communications navigations technician, VMFA(AW)-121. "It is similar to the 'check engine' light in an automobile."

After several minutes of testing, the aircraft's system verified the problem to be the radar receiver. The Marines replaced the receiver and ran another test. The test concluded that the problem was again the radar receiver.

"I think it is the antenna," said Groebner, a

23-year-old native of El Paso, Texas. "Sometimes if one thing is wrong, the test may think the other components are also wrong."

Martinez said they took parts from a different aircraft with a functioning radar system.

"We borrowed the parts from another bird to help us determine what is wrong with this one," said Martinez.

The Marines replaced the parts that they suspected to be the problem with parts from another aircraft. Another series of tests determined the problem to be both the antenna and the radar receiver.

The Marines determined the problem using the aircraft's simple built-in tests and their experience and knowledge of the aircraft.

"We came out here not knowing what was wrong," concluded Martinez. "The problem is now fixed and we're done."



Cpl. Edward L. Martinez, communications navigations technician, Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 121, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, observes his Marines Feb. 16 as they run a systems test on an F/A-18 Hornet at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar to determine any discrepancies with the aircraft's radar system. Photo by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

Get Noticed by Motorists...



NOT BY PMO

MARINE CORPS ORDER 5100.19E STATES:

"During periods of reduced visibility, and before morning colors and after evening colors, personnel shall wear retro-reflective clothing, vest or belt when conducting physical training or exercising on or near roadways."

**It's not just a good idea
IT'S THE LAW**

‘Wolfpack’ achieves 60,000 mishap-free hours



Wolfpack Marines gather around the CH-53E Super Stallion that landed Feb. 18 at Al Asad, Iraq, marking 60,000 hours of flight time since the squadron was established in November 1984. This landing also recorded the 60,000th hour of “Class A” mishap-free flight time for Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). *Photo by Lance Cpl. Brandon L. Roach*

Story by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke

3rd MAW Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq — Dust kicked up in the afternoon sun as two CH-53E Super Stallions lowered onto the sand-covered tarmac, setting a record for the Wolfpacks. Their Feb. 18 flights reached a goal of 60,000 “Class A” mishap-free hours of flight for Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward).

“The primary mission of heavy helicopter squadrons is the movement of heavy supplies and equipment,” said Lt. Col. John H. Celigoy, commanding officer, HMH-466. “The secondary mission is the moving of personnel. We can either move supplies internally or externally.”

According to the Bellvue, Wash., native, more than 22 years have passed since the squadron was commissioned in November 1984, and it has never had a “Class A” mishap.

“There is a ‘Class A’ mishap, where an aircraft is destroyed or personnel are killed,” said

continued on page 7

Feature

continued from page 6

Celigoy. “There are ‘Class B’ mishaps, where there is damage to the aircraft in excess of \$200,000. A ‘Class C’ mishap is \$20,000 to \$200,000 damage to the aircraft.”

However, the feat of 60,000 mishap-free hours wasn’t the only record broken that afternoon. “The squadron has flown 60,000 hours total in its history,” said Celigoy. “Since February 2004, we have flown 10,000 hours in support of (Operation Iraqi Freedom). We’ve flown a sixth of our hours in the last two years.”

According to Lance Cpl. James R. Terwilligar, mechanic, HMH-466, every job performed at the squadron goes into keeping the safety standard.

“Good maintenance and good training from the senior guys has helped us keep this safety record,” said the Tilton, N.H., native. “Since the day we checked in, we were told that we were the best squadron, and we have the numbers to back it up, so we continue to work toward that goal.”



A CH-53E Super Stallion lands in front of the Wolfpack headquarters at Al Asad, Iraq, Feb. 18, marking the 60,000th hour of flight since the commissioning of the squadron in November 1984. Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), also recorded their 60,000th hour of “Class A” mishap-free flight from this sortie. *Photo by Lance Cpl. Brandon L. Roach*

Although the squadron has gone its entire existence without a “Class A” mishap, it has not been an easy accomplishment.

“We run 12-hour shifts here,” said Celigoy. “It is definitely a challenge. You have to be constantly vigilant from every level of leadership from the commanding

officer all the way down to the noncommissioned officers. You are constantly fighting against complacency, because you are literally working every day.”

According to Celigoy, a graduate of the University of Washington, it’s not any single Marine or section that has kept the safety record together.

“When you are talking about 22 years, it’s generations of Wolfpack Marines who have fought to keep that record intact,” Celigoy concluded. “They are supporting all of us, and it represents a badge of pride that we’ve kept our aircraft flying safely and that we’ve brought all of our crews home alive.”

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!



MCAS Miramar needs servicemembers from all ranks, occupations, experiences, backgrounds and upbringings to participate in the Guest Speaker Program. If you are interested, call the Community Relations Department at (858) 577-4333.

An appreciative audience awaits

Semper Fi Fund helps wounded Marines, families

Story by Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

With the Marine Corps' high operational tempo and training schedule, some Marines and sailors have suffered serious injury while serving their country. While the Marine Corps takes care of their own, the Department of Defense has overall regulations pertaining to assistance and case guidelines.

Since April 2004, the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund has been making a difference by providing financial assistance to seriously injured Marines and sailors. As a non-profit organization, the Semper Fi Fund relies on donations. Those donations are tax deductible and many companies offer matching gift programs that can increase the donation.

Though the fund is mainly for Marines and sailors, other service members injured while assigned to Marine forces are also eligible for assistance.

Marines injured in combat zones are stabilized in military hospitals in Germany before returning to the U.S. Upon their return, critical care is provided at places like the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where hospital stays are not usually short.

Serious injury can keep a Marine in the hospital for months and in physical therapy for years.

Most families are unprepared for the related expenses. In some cases, family members travel great distances at a moment's notice to be with their loved ones when they need them most.

Because family members are forced to take time off work, often unpaid, the costs in loss of income, travel, food and lodging can be overwhelming. It can be difficult for them to make ends meet.

The fund's mission is to help Marines, sailors and



Sgt. James King tells R. Lee Ermey, best known as the Marine drill instructor in the movie "Full Metal Jacket," that he plans to enter the Marine Corps Marathon and the New York Marathon after he recovers from the amputation of his left leg. Ermey met recovering war wounded May 12, 2004, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington as part of a United Service Organizations-sponsored visit. Photo by Michael E. Dukes

their families meet their financial needs during these trying times. The fund works closely with the Marine Corps, Navy and hospitals to identify and assess the needs of the families. The evaluation is thorough and the application is easy to fill out. Assistance is commonly delivered within 72 hours of the request.

The fund also sponsors a team at the annual

Marine Corps Marathon. During the recent 2005 Marine Corps Marathon, the fund had a 90-member team — five of the team members were injured Marines who were helped by the fund.

For more information, contact the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund at (703) 640-0181 or visit online at www.semperfifund.org.

NMCRS provides relief for service members

Story by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Miramar's Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society's annual fund drive began Feb. 22 and is scheduled to end April 1.

The fund drive is designed to replenish the funds that are distributed in the form of grants each year, said Ann Evans, director of NMCRS for MCAS Miramar.

The goal of the fund drive is also to increase awareness of Marines and sailors and their families about the availability of assistance from NMCRS.

The society also wants to obtain funds that are essential to the continuation of the organization, as well as provide fund drive materials sent to deployed units as soon as possible.

In addition to allotments, checks and cash donations, commands are encouraged to sponsor other types of fund raising activities. Some of these activities include fun runs, car washes and military skills competitions.

The mission of the NMCRS is to provide financial, and educational assistance to members of the Naval services of the United States, and their eligible family members, when in need, according to www.nmcrs.org.

NMCRS does a remarkable job of helping our Marines and sailors, said Maj. Gen. Samuel T. Helland, commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

NMCRS has many ways to support these service members. They help through grants, interest-free loans and even financial counseling.

"If financial support is needed, we will be there," said Evans.

The society helps Marines and sailors in a variety of ways. They have layette programs to educate new parents about the impact of a new baby on their finances.

There are about 30 NMCRS thrift shops across the U.S. that provide service members with discount cloth-



Julie Jensen, a volunteer worker at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Thrift store, sorts books Feb. 28 at the thrift store. The books are sold at discount to Marines and sailors to help raise funds for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society. Photo by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin

ing and furniture. The money raised is then returned to the Navy-Marine Corps community in relief services. The society also has counseling for those who have trouble with their monthly budget.

Last year the society brought in \$39.5 million nationally. The 2005 fund drive raised \$165,000 within Miramar. In 2005, \$1.1 million was distributed to 672 clients in combat casualty assistance. Additionally there was \$2,218,569 in grants and loans to help 5,692 families after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

"(Last year) was not only a year of natural disasters, but terrorist activity," said Evans. "The Marines and

sailors have been instrumental in fighting these insurgents."

In 2005, the society spent \$651,355 (within Miramar) in interest-free loans and \$127,315 (within Miramar) in grants given to service members, according to Maj. Jerry J. West, NMCRS area coordinator.

NMCRS is always looking for new ways to collect money to help service members. This year's goal is to raise \$180,000.

These fund drives highlight the ways they help, and provide information to Marines and sailors who may not already know about the society.

MASS-6 supports MAGTF, 3rd MAW missions

Communication is key for mission accomplishment

Story by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Radio chatter picks up when an overwhelming enemy force ambushes a Marine squad on patrol.

The squad could have been easily overrun if it weren't for the support provided through the use of effective communications.

Communication units provide the much-needed link between the ground and their supporting units.

Detachment Alpha of Marine Air Support Squadron 6, Marine Aircraft Group 46, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar is a key player in maintaining the readiness of the Corps' Reserve Marines.

Communication squadrons play an important role in the coordination and success of mission accomplishment for the Marine Corps.

"We coordinate between air, artillery and ground units to make the Marine Corps combined arms system really work," said Gunnery Sgt. Joseph D. Bertain, operations chief, MASS-6.

Throughout their training evolutions the Marines receive simulated calls requesting support, after which they process the request and coordinate the next course of action.

"We dedicate (our evolutions) to operational training," said Capt. Elizabeth A. Painter, inspector-instructor officer-in-charge, MASS-6. "The intent of (our) training is to put the Marines in a simulated situation that they may experience during deployment."

The training consists of practical application, which is among the most effective methods that instill experience and knowledge in Marines.

"You can only do so much with day-long classes and slide shows," said Painter, a 30-year-old native of Alvin, Texas. "Hands-on work is the best way to get the knowledge to sink in."

All the equipment used by the communication squadron is different, but it all works together as a whole.

The Marines have to transport their equipment to the training site, set it up and test it.

"The training (gives) Marines a chance to be proficient with their gear and feel comfortable with it," added Painter.

Bertain, a 30-year-old native of Eureka, Calif., said the Marines commonly receive a simulated Joint Tactical Air Request such as offensive air support and Air Support Requests for logistical deliveries and medical evacuations. From there, they are processed and relayed accordingly.

MASS-6 provides a critical link between Marine ground and air units.



A Humvee with communication equipment belonging to Marine Air Support Squadron 6, Marine Aircraft Group 46, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar is a key component to the unit's mission accomplishment and maintaining unit readiness. Communication assets like this vehicle play a vital role in the success of the Marine Corps. MASS-6 provides the link between ground and air units which results in making the Marine Air Ground Task Force function effectively. Photo by Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver

Briefs

Miramar Movies

The Bob Hope Theater is located in Building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, call 577-4143 or log on to www.mccsmiramar.com.

Friday:
6:30 p.m. Hoodwinked (PG)
9:00 p.m. Munich (R)

Saturday:
6:30 p.m. The Last Holiday (PG-13)
9:00 p.m. Glory Road (PG)

Sunday:
1:00 p.m. *Rumor Has It (PG-13)
6:30 p.m. *The Producers (PG-13)

Wednesday:
6:30 p.m. Tristan and Isolde (PG-13)

Thursday:
11:30 a.m. Flumpa & Friends (LIVE Special-Free)
6:30 p.m. The Last Holiday (PG-13)

* Indicates the last showing for that film

Military Tax Center

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Tax Center is now open, providing service members and their families with free tax services.

The center is located at Building 6250 and is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Hours of operation will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. when the tax season nears its end April 15.

Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office is located in Building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain's Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:
9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist
Wednesday:
7 p.m. Baptist service
Monday-Friday:
11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass
Jewish:
7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

Mom or Dad Deployed?

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Youth and Teen Center is hosting a gathering for children of deployed Marines and sailors every second and fourth Monday of each month. Ages 8 to 10 meet from 3:30 to 4:15, ages 11 to 13 meet from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. For more information, call 577-1322.

Thrift Shop Web Site

Miramar's Navy Marine Corps Relief Society Thrift Shop has a new Web site.

The site contains information about what services the non-profit organization can provide for service members and their families.

For more information, visit the Web site at www.mccsmiramar.com.

Power Yoga Classes

Challenge your balance, strength and endurance with Power Yoga classes on Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m., at the Miramar Sports Complex and Fridays at 11:30 at the Semper Fit Center. For more information, call 577-4669.

OWC 2006 Continuing Education Scholarship

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar's Officers' Wives Club is accepting applications for the Continuing Education Scholarships from the families of MCAS Miramar's active duty, retired, or deceased military. Applications must be received no later than April 1. Applications are available online at www.mccsmiramar.com.

Impounded Vehicles

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information contact the Provost Marshal's Office at 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:	Vehicle:	License:
Unk. Chevy Camaro	CA/4WW251	1991 Eagle Talon	OH/DLA3730
1968 Ford Mustang	CA/WSS386	1990 Ford Bronco	NY/CFX1143
1968 Ford Mustang	MT/3B43644	1967 Chevy Camaro	UT/021VBN
Unk. Acura Integra	CA/5AFT065	2002 Dodge Ram	CA/6Z64544
1995 Ford Mustang	CO/446HTB	1972 Chevy Pickup	MI/9660MN